1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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be divorced from the patterns of relationships which they symbolize, and their role cannot be understood except in the fact. 593

If then we turn back to the common life of the families of the small farmers, it is these very terms which give us the clue to the relationships which that life builds up.

In the Irish family, the sons and the daughters are equally subordinate; there is no formal distinction made between them. The kinship terms of both the English and the Irish languages reflect this equivalence of siblings. In either case, one term, son or *mac*, reflects the unity of the position of all male children, the procreated generation, from the point of view of the elder or procreant pair, the mother and father. Similarly, a single term in both languages, brother and *dearbhráthair*, expresses for the siblings their common occupancy of that position. Rural Ireland knows neither primogeniture nor junior right. Except as age differences separate them informally, the brothers occupy the same status both within and outside the family group. Thus neighbors and other outsiders refer to them all alike as "the boys" of the farmer's family. 593 601

Accordingly, their equality reflects itself in farm activity. All are on an equal footing there. The brothers are all alike under the father's direction and control as long as they remain on the farm. They work together, and the years of common effort and common dependence create a strong solidarity between them. Though only one of them may ordinarily expect to inherit land and cattle, the others renounce their rights as it were in the interests of the identification of the family group with the land they work. The bloody faction fights which used to disfigure Irish country life have practically passed away, but the forces which brought them into existence still continue. Many a country fight involving a dispute over rights of way and water courses brings in the adherents of all the brothers of either 593 628 [428]

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593 628 house, and, though the cases nowadays find their way into the courts, a very common defense is that the feud is very long-standing and that "the two grandfathers" began it. The tales written in the last century by William Carleton, who wrote of a life he himself knew intimately, describe faction fights in which whole parishes became involved, but the center of disturbance was invariably a family dispute in which the brothers of a family ranged with their friends against those of another. So fierce is the solidarity which the identification of brothers and their land calls forth that even today in Clare the name "defending Tim Flanagan's title" is jocularly given to forcible resistance to eviction, after a famous stalwart of the last century whose ten sons fought valiantly for their father's farm.

593 589 In fact, this emotional attachment is strong enough sometimes to preclude the breaking up of the family. Two instances of this sort came under the authors' special notice out of the many which occur. It is difficult to get the exact figures, since census materials deal only with the marital status of farm owners, but many of the bachelor-owned farms of Clare may be of this type. In the first case, two brothers and four sisters occupied a small holding of twenty-three acres and a four-room house for over fifty years. Several of them at various times had tried to break away; in fact, two brothers did, but the ones who stayed gave as their reason first that they hadn't wanted to leave the old people and afterwards that none of them had wanted "to be the first to leave." The second case was very similar. Two brothers and a sister had stayed on to work a small farm for their old parents, but, when the old couple died, none of them wanted to leave and each felt too old for marriage.

593 428 Whatever differences make a rift in this fraternal front are matters more of preparation for leaving the farm family than of internal differentiation in status and behavior. On most small farms only one son can be kept at home as suc-

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cessor to land and chattels. The family property, house, stock, and land, descend to him intact. The other sons must be provided for elsewhere. 428

In choosing the son to remain upon the farm, the father has full power of decision. His interest lies in choosing among his sons the one he thinks will carry on most successfully. There is no rule or norm in the matter; and the brothers are united in expecting an adequate return for their years of service. But none of them may claim more than the other, and they are all dependent upon the father's sense of their fair deserts. In many cases there may be an early difference among them in the inclinations they show in adolescence. But the special position a brother occupies in this regard is a matter of agreement among them all and easy enough of adjustment.

Turning now to the other relationships neither fraternal nor parental within the family, it is obvious that those among the females and between females and males build up in the same way as the ones we have already discussed. 593

The family makes a formal distinction between the female members and their male fellow members in terminology, just as it builds a dichotomy of behavior upon the sexual difference. Thus in the procreated generation daughter and sister, *inghean* and *deirbhshiúr*, correspond to son and brother; for the daughters occupy equivalent positions in a common subordination to the parents. 593 601

These terms express merely a classification of the female individuals and their positions in the complex of reciprocal relationships between family members. What has been said of the conditioning of the boy can be repeated of the girl, with, of course, a difference in the techniques acquired. And no less than in the boy's case, farm work is merely a part of the total adaptation the girl makes toward her fellows and toward the environment in which they live. 593 861

The work of the women is as important in farm economy

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permit her to marry into local farms, in two of the cases on a somewhat better scale than the farms which they had left. The case of the South African shows how the man also may return with his fortune to establish himself in his native district after several years or even a decade or two of exile.

The dowry or marriage portion is, of course, a phenomenon universal in European peasant life. What gives it special interest here is its intimate connection with the farm family and with the land. That connection is evidenced particularly in the "writings."

After the "walking of the land" and the making of the bargain, the two parties to marry go to a solicitor. There the agreements reached are cast into proper legal form. The "writings" is a legal instrument conveying the ownership of the holding to the son. It is usually both marriage settlement and will. On the event of the stipulated marriage, the father conveys the farm and all appurtenances to his son in return for the portion brought in by the girl. The father makes also definite provisions for his own maintenance and that of his wife. Generally, these include the right to the "grass of a cow," to food and the use of the hearth, perhaps the yield of one patch of potatoes, and the use of a room in the house. The room is nearly always, at least in West and North Clare, the one known as the "west room" for reasons we shall examine later. To take care of possible disputes arising out of the failure of these provisions to work smoothly, certain very hard-headed stipulations are often included, allowing for the conversion of these rights into cash support or a lump sum.

In return for the farm, the father receives the fortune brought in by the girl and paid to him by her father. Furthermore, the provisions which must be made for other children are often transferred with the land. The father is now expected to give (if he has not given them already) portions to those of his children who are not to be settled

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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583 428 at home on the land. Where the will and marriage settlement are one and the same document, these obligations are passed on to the inheriting son.

The following description of several "writings" (which we examined) given by an Ennis solicitor specializing in this lucrative practice illustrates the type and the possibilities of variation. The solicitor is describing certain marriage settlements, the originals of which he held in his hand:

> In this settlement John F— of C— had one son and two daughters at home. He left the farm, you see, all that goes with it, to his son on condition of his marrying the girl named here in the deed. He also made the transfer subject to the son's providing for the two daughters by giving them rights of residence and keep in the house as long as they remain unmarried, and by making them special money gifts when they should marry. He then reserved a right for his wife, leaving her a small sum, and the right to the potato patch and her bedroom free of all charge as long as she lived. In the event of her not liking the new arrangements, she was to get a monthly stipend in lieu of her keep and room until she died.

We shall go on to give this interview in some detail to illustrate the full character of the arrangements made. The solicitor continues:

> If there are two sons . . . one of them gets the farm, and when the old people find a girl with a suitable fortune, and the son marries her, they give the money over to the next son, or they provide with it for the other children who haven't yet gone off. It's a pernicious system. [An upper-class person is speaking, not a farmer.] You'll go out to a small holding and see several able-bodied men and women waiting around doing nothing. They are waiting for the eldest son to get married and for their share of the fortune the wife brings in.

674 What may happen when such an arrangement fails to work smoothly for one reason or another may be seen from the following examples. The first is the description (recorded in the course of a general conversation, not elicited in any

592 with this china only under dire necessity. In many districts
352 the year's supply of home-cured bacon still hangs from the
353 rafters.

343 From the kitchen to the haggard, the farmyards, and cow sheds is but a step through one of the half-doors. There are found the sheds and outhouses where all the livestock, agricultural implements, carts, are kept and the fuel supply and the hayrick stand.

513 Sleeping arrangements reflect the age grading and the
561 sexual arrangements within the family. Children generally
562 occupy the "loft," a boarded attic covering from a quarter to a half of the space under the peak of the roof. If space is restricted, they may also occupy the "settlebed" in the kitchen, or they may be divided up between the two on the basis of sex. Older children and the married couple will occupy the bedrooms.

353 The room, however, which we described as occupying
512 the part of the rectangle behind the hearth in the kitchen is of especial interest. It may or may not be used as a bedroom. It is generally so used only when space is limited. But in this room all the objects of sentimental value (except the shrine and the dresser in the kitchen) are always kept: the religious pictures, the ceremonial objects brought in by the bride at marriage, and the bric-a-brac associated with the past members of the household. Where there is only one couple in the house, this room is reserved as a sort of parlor into which none but distinguished visitors are admitted. [523] The family heirlooms are there, and, lining the walls along with religious pictures, there appear the photographs of the members of the family, especially the familiar daguerreotypes of the last century. Whatever "fine" pieces of furniture [352] there may be, such as highboys, cabinets, brass candlesticks, are kept there, as are all the religious objects used when mass is celebrated in the house. All these objects are inalienable [425] in the sense that the family parts with them only when it [428] Must, They descend from Father to son with the house and the farm on which it stands.

of the farm on the stipulation that his brother should marry. The brother thus got wife, dowry, and farm; and the identity of land and family was preserved for a new generation.

Time and time again that continuity of identification lies at the root of the behavior which follows upon the transference of control within a family.

Particularly in the case of the incomplete farm families, a wide variety of arrangements appear to effect the same transition without going beyond the group. As the following generality explains, it is only the "crabbit" farmer who breaks through the circle of reciprocal obligation:

> If there is no heir to hold the land, they [the childless couple] might give it to a friend, the nearest to the husband, or the wife might give it to the nearest to her. The husband might take a boy from his brother or, if he's crabbit, he will sell it and go to town and drink the money.

But the second contingency that the wife might give the land to one of her kindred may be a source of trouble. The great emphasis upon patriliny militates against it. As the countrymen say, they "want to keep the name on the house; they are dying to have the same name on the house."

At any rate some of the matches between cousins arise, consciously or not, because of this desire. And they occur here and there in country districts, even though the full weight of the Church's authority is against them. Countrymen on occasion have explained that they are love-matches. By impregnating the girl, the boy forces the priest to allow the marriage "for cause." Soberer opinion, nevertheless, condemns such action. It is no light thing to "destroy a girl's character."

There are many more subtle ways of effecting the same end. Nieces and nephews, even grandchildren, may be brought into the house, and matches made for them. In this regard a conflict arises between legal right and social custom. The country districts recognize only vaguely the

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right of a woman to hold property. The patrilineal identification of family and land is incompatible with it. Whatever farm a woman works or controls is regarded as a trust for a son or brother of her husband or father.

The conflict is naturally never so phrased, nor is it ever debated. Yet there are many instances which show behavior, accepted fully as right and just by the local community, which reveal the patrilineal identification. A widow, for instance, remains upon the farm only if the children are beginning to grow up. If they are very young, she returns to her parents and a husband's brother may take the farm. Even if she marries, she and her new husband merely hold the land in trust. The new husband is, graphically, a "stranger to the land."

As a "stranger" he has no right to it. In a village in mid-Clare, to give an example, a "Yank" returned after many years in the United States to his father's farm, from which he and all his brothers had emigrated. His mother, now dead, had married again, and her two children by her second husband still worked the farm. D——, the "Yank," threw the husband out into the road, told him to go home, and took up the land. Later when he gave fortunes to both of the children, the village felt he had made ample amends for the stepfather's years of toil.

Whether or not there is a legally executed will, it is much the same. In Luogh, a son, inheriting a farm upon the death of his mother, allowed her old second husband to stay on with him. He was said to be "very kind to the old man." In Inagh again, though a small farmer, dying, willed the family's farm to his wife and children, a brother on a neighboring farm got most of the land. "He paid her nothing for it. He took bits of it here and there until it was all gone." Whatever protest there is must come from the growing nephews. Inagh makes none.

In matchmaking, too, legal form may be subordinated to

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583 142 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY IN IRELAND
602 but ones in which brothers-in-law flared up to strike one another even though after a week or so the two connections became reconciled.

428 583 Up to this point we have failed to distinguish between wills and marriage settlements in the statement of match-making and transfer of farms. The confusion is justified because in so many cases they are one and the same. Nevertheless, the subject of wills made apart from the son's marriage needs discussion. If our conclusions as to the nature of farm marriage are valid, something of the same play of changes, obligations, and goods must be present.

Money in the dowry functions to recompense the farmer for his relinquishment of the farm and the break-up of the family which he headed. Similarly, in the cases where inheritance proceeds without marriage, money plays the same role. There are many instances in which the old farmer has demanded payment for the property his heir is to receive. Let an Ennis solicitor describe his experience with one of them:

428 763 I remember an old fellow, Jimmy B — of K — who was taken off dying to the County Home. He called for me to go out there and make a will for him. Seven wills I made for that old codger before he was through. He hadn't any idea of dying. He had only ten or fifteen acres of a farm, but he said he would give it to his son [only] if the son paid him ten pounds a year for it. They often do that, make the son pay from ten pounds to fifty pounds a year for the land. Then [when the solicitor pointed out that the son would inherit the money anyway as the old fellow had no other heirs], old Jimmy made me make another will leaving the money itself to the son.

Another case the authors knew involved no son. The old fellow left a small farm to his cousin and even though he was on the verge of dying, he forced the cousin to pay for it.

In still another instance, an old fellow had some land and about two hundred and fifty pounds to give away. He gave

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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the money in a will, but insisted the son pay for the land. 428 763
After that, there was a cow and a calf left over, which he reserved for himself. When he called in a solicitor to make another will disposing of the cow and calf, this time, as he lay dying in the County Home, the nun in charge said he had been awake all night mumbling to himself about the cow and calf. The solicitor and the nun finally got him to leave the money for masses.

These cases show the hold of the pattern of receiving 428
money for the transfer of family property. It must be understood that under ordinary circumstances the payment the son had to make would be devoted to the other children, as is the dowry. But in these cases the pattern persisted though there were no other children.

Another case occurred in which a farmer named Patrick [429]
N— left money, farm, and everything he had to his nephew Michael in trusteeship to be given to him upon his marriage with the trustee's approval. Here no money was demanded, but another common feature of countrymen's wills was involved which throws light on the general family situation. The old man had other nephews who had given him a hand from time to time in fulfillment of the agricultural pattern. By mischance they discovered the content of the will, called their uncle an "old fraud" and a "robber," and stopped working for him. A generous move on the part of Michael prevented further bad blood.

English law of property gives the owner full right to dispose at will of farm and other real property as personal chattels. That right is, of course, embodied in Irish legal practice. But the situation underlying the Irish farm life is otherwise. In the first cases cited, we see a tendency to enforce payment for the farm, analogous to the dowry. In the last case, the basis for that tendency is the expectation of provision on the part of the family members. With the transfer of the farm and the break of the family at either

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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428 the match or death, the other members of the family must be provided for.

(It may be for this reason, the conflict between legal right and social obligation, that so many countrymen's wills are drawn up in elaborate secrecy, the solicitor creeping out in the dead of night to a lightless cottage in the bogs somewhere to make a will for an old fellow who for one reason or another refuses to fulfill obligations, real or fancied, to his kindred and neighbors. The authors had frequent descriptions of this from solicitors and townsmen to whom the piquancy of the situation appealed, but obtained none, unfortunately, from the countryman's point of view. They did receive accounts from countrymen of their attempts to conceal their visits to solicitors in town.)

Even in these cases in which the usual sequence of events is upset or changed through special circumstances, the same concern for rebuilding and changing the family relationships in a certain definite manner appears. The dowry, like the rest of the behavior at the match, is understandable only in such terms. Even, as in the case of wills of the kind just reported, where transfer of land alone is involved, the same concern is present. That is, the match is here by implication, if nothing else, and the mechanism of social change it provides is at work even *in absentia*.

CHAPTER VIII

Dispersal and Emigration

THE internal reorganization of the family consequent on the marriage of one of their number produces a marked change in the situation of the as yet unprovided-for brothers and sisters. The other members of the family broken up by the marriage of one of their number on the home farm must be provided for elsewhere. They feel themselves entitled to portions, either in the form of dowries to marry into another farm or of some other means of establishing themselves. If such provisions in fact are not made, conflict arises, as we saw in the case of the McDermott murder. A classical case in the Ennis region of Clare was that of an old farmer of substance who married a nineteen-year-old girl when he was eighty. When the birth of a son precipitated a crisis, he had to be protected from his scandalized relatives, sons, and daughters by the police. When he died the following year, he gave a hundred pounds each to the constable who protected him and the priest "plucky enough to marry me." His sons refused to attend his funeral.

Normally, however, the transfer of land and the break-up of the family which worked it is made with the fullest possible provision for the other children. The dowry brought in is utilized to that end, and the savings of a lifetime on the farm have been used. The following observations made by a Land Commission official, himself a small farmer's son

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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593 and a man with many years' experience in Irish rural affairs,
428 attempt to give a statement of the generalities. They express, however, an ideal rather than an actuality.

The average household consists of six persons [and the parents]. Of necessity not more than one could be provided for on the holding and assuming, for example, that the family consisted of two girls and four boys, the position would be somewhat as follows:

593 The eldest son would in the course of years assume ownership
428 of the holding. A second son might be provided with a second-
874 ary education and might possibly win a County Council scholarship . . . enabling him to pursue a course of engineering or medicine practically free. In the event, however, of his not being so fortunate, the thrift of the family may enable him to pursue a similar course at the university, the intervals between terms and the long vacation being spent on the farm.

Some years ago medicine was the profession usually pursued provided the boy had no vocation for the priesthood. At that time the cost of his board was appreciably reduced by an arrangement through which neighbors' sons lodged together and brought with them supplies of potatoes, oatmeal, home-cured pork, in fact, provided for almost all their own food. When the boy is qualified to his own particular calling, to his credit it may be said that he denies himself many little luxuries in order to pay back the cost of his training and thus assist the other members of his family.

593 The third son either got trained in business and in due course
428 started one of his own, or emigrated where he could also refund the cost to his parents. The fourth son might possibly become a primary school teacher, a civic guard, a tradesman [artisan] apprenticed by his father in the near-by town, or again his family might give him enough to marry into another small holding.

One of the girls received a dowry or, as they say here, she was "fortuned off" into another small holding of similar status. The second girl possibly favored nursing, teaching, business, or domestic service, or again possibly religion, or even a clerical position of some sort either here or abroad.

166 The above quotation states the generalities in terms of
463 upward social mobility. The influx of the country people
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1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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into the towns, into governmental, professional positions, and into the ranks of urban occupations must wait for special analysis in itself. It is not possible here to determine how great the effect of this movement from the small farms is upon the current much lamented overcrowding of the professions in Ireland. The point of interest for us is the dispersal of the farm group.

Naturally enough, this dispersal does not always occur so happily as in the above statement of the ideal. Yet the portioning off of the children and the success with which it is done is the pride as well as the duty of every farm family. A few examples will give the variations. They are more matters of success or failure to advance beyond the level of small farm life, but they show the genesis of the movement in the farm family. In a later section this subject will be dealt with in more detail. These examples, however, are typical, though the names are fictitious.

Leary of F —, a farmer with sixty acres, has a daughter married near-by with a four hundred pound fortune, and another, a nun in Mercy Convent, Ennis. Four sons have entered the priesthood, an expensive training from his point of view. A fifth is at home working, not yet thirty. Leary is a "strong" farmer, highly prosperous.

Tom Casey, K —, is a very poor holder with thirty acres of mountain and bog. Two sons and a daughter are still at home, and a bachelor brother works with him. Another daughter works for herself as a domestic servant in Ennis. One son Tom is apprenticed to a carpenter in Ennis. A daughter emigrated through the good graces of her aunt.

Michael Dunn of T — has twenty acres, but has not prospered. His two sons left at eighteen and twenty respectively to drive hackney automobiles in Ennis, an uncle there giving them a start. Another son now thirty and a daughter are still at home working the farm.

In a mountain townland, Pat Looney's father prospered, won the good graces of the landlord's agent, amassed four farms, the largest fifty acres, the smallest eighteen. He married off two 593 578 428

593 578 428 daughters with two hundred pound fortunes, settled three sons and a daughter with her husband in each of the farms. Pat himself, the eldest, now about eighty, got the largest farm but not the one he wanted. He has been warring with his brothers and his neighbors ever since. He held out against his father for five years, refusing to marry and take his farm. In Pat's youth, land agitation and reform had not yet prevented subdivision and acquiring of new farms by a successful tenant. Pat on his fifty-acre mountain farm has married off a daughter locally at three hundred pounds and sent two sons out to America. Another daughter works in England. Two sons, aged forty-three and thirty-six, are at home and Pat hasn't made up his mind yet which one shall get the land.

593 167 The examples, various as they are, need not be multiplied. The sons and daughter who are not to be portioned at home, in the words of the Luogh residents, "must travel." To that end both the savings of the family, created through their united efforts under the headship of father and mother, and [583] the incoming dowry, are devoted. In Luogh there had been only four marriages in ten years; two of them were the usual farm-transferring matches, one a returned emigrant who married a boyhood sweetheart and bought a farm, and one a widower who took a second wife and a second fortune. An old woman described the situation: "There aren't any matches nowadays. Nobody has a fortune to give his daughter and the young men must travel." [454] Yet the woman who lamented this state of affairs was carefully husbanding half crowns for her baby granddaughter's fortune.

593' 167 457 434 Nevertheless this necessary dispersal of the members of the family at its reorganization does not ordinarily destroy the family ties. The bonds of affection and family obligation still hold. If they have emigrated, the family members send back remittances and passage money for nephews and nieces and brothers and sisters left at home. A great many farms, especially in West and North Clare, are partially supported by Christmas gifts from Americans and other exiles. It is

7:Johnson K-4 (no date) 1958
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Ireland as "rundale" or "runrig."[8] Under rundale the land surrounding a settlement was worked as a joint farm, with individual plots and strips scattered through the arable land, some on the constantly tilled infield and some on shifting outfield patches reclaimed periodically from the waste.[9] By the early nineteenth century this form of agriculture had become extremely complicated, as a result of the rapidly increasing population and of the Irish practice of subdividing a restricted amount of arable land among all the male heirs of the household. In modern surviving examples the clachan and cultivation in rundale are closely interrelated, and it is generally assumed that they do not function independently. But a complication to this interpretation has emerged in a small area of County Down that has been examined by R. H. Buchanan[10] within the limits set by the available manuscript material. Here a set of estate maps shows clachans apparently developed in association with compact holdings. Although this work, which refers to a small area and uses a narrow range of information, may not weaken the great body of evidence that suggests a direct relationship between rundale agriculture and clachan settlement, at least it indicates that the relationship needs to be carefully appraised in each individual case.

Two Nineteenth-Century Investigators

Although changes in the pattern of Irish rural settlement have only recently been uncovered by research, the periodic reports of the various Royal Commissions concerned with nineteenth-century Ireland make it clear that the inhabitants of the country were not unaware of the changes taking place around them.[11] Hence it is not surprising that at least two nineteenth-century scholars, Frederic Seebohm and August Meitzen, knew of clachan settlement.

Seebohm's attention was focused on the manorial and tribal systems and on the open-field system of cultivation.[12] It was this latter interest in particular

[8] D. McCourt: Infield and Outfield in Ireland, *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, Ser. 2, Vol. 7, 1954–1955, pp. 369–376.

[9] Flatrès believes that the outfield was not widely found in Ireland but was a late introduction, brought in the early seventeenth century by Scottish settlers (Pierre Flatrès: Géographie rurale de quatre contrées celtiques—Irlande, Galles, Cornwall & Man [Rennes, 1957]). No attempt has been made here to evaluate Flatrès' ambitious study, of particular interest, however, is his map of the modern field systems of Ireland (Fig. 1). [Reviewed in this number of the *Geographical Review*, p. 599.—Edit. Note.]

[10] The author is grateful to Mr. Buchanan for this information in advance of its publication.

[11] In particular see the evidence presented to the Devon Commission (Report from Her Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry [Lord Devon, Chairman] into . . . the Occupation of Land in Ireland [6 parts (in 5 vols.), London, 1845; British Parliamentary Papers 1845, XIX–XXIII]).

[12] Frederic Seebohm: The English Village Community, Examined in Its Relations to the Manorial and Tribal Systems and to the Common or Open Field System of Husbandry (2nd edit., London, 1883).

[Text continues on p. 558]

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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182 593 606 842 One countryman of North Clare put that first year into words: "At first", he said, "the boy's people make much of the new woman. They would hardly let her work at all. This carries on for seven or eight months, and if then the old people don't see evidence of increase of young, they get angry and abuse her. But if they do, they don't let her do any work at all now and are so proud."

In such a situation barrenness is a curse and a disgrace. The husband has every right to express his disappointment and his displeasure. It is a source of shame to him as well. He fails in preserving the continuity of his line upon the land.

One childless woman of Inagh in Clare knew bitterly how much both family and community support these attitudes: "No matter how much money you have," she said, "no matter how good-looking you are, if you don't have children, you are no good. But if you are ugly as the worst and have children, you are all right." Then she went on, to perpetrate an Irish bull, perhaps, but to express the matter very forcibly: "The man wants children just as much as the woman. He is afraid others will tell him he is no good if he hasn't any. Children are the curse of this country, especially if you haven't any."

182 593 428 Nevertheless, there are other ways of ensuring the continuity. They 'keep the name on the land' too, but they are makeshifts at best. These makeshifts transfer control of the land, as does the match.

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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But in each case, they conform to the system of values lying at the centre of the countryman's way of life. They are social detours, ways past the obstacles of adverse circumstance and bad luck.

For instance there used to be, not long ago, what was known as a 'country divorce'. In the old days, they say, a farmer might send a barren wife back to her parents. He could not marry again, of course; Catholic law forbids it. But he could do something just as effective in assuring the family descendants. He could remarry, not in his own person, but in that of his brother. The two men are equivalent in status, why should they not act sociologically as a single individual. Even today this device survives. Thus a farmer of Corofin, in North Clare, could make use of it. Childless after several years, he got a 'country divorce'. Then he gave the land to his brother, in return for a large fortune, on the stipulation that his brother should marry. One brother thus got wife and farm; the other the dowry. The identity of land and family were preserved for another generation.

What other devices are possible has already appeared in what I previously called 'incomplete families'. Nephews, nieces, even grandchildren may be brought in. In time, a match is made for them, and normal succession assured. The former owners move to the 'west room'; they become the old people, and the pattern of a complete farm family unit is restored. To the country-people it

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

182 602 428 is only the 'crabbit' person who will sell the land, and 'go to town and drink the money'. Such conduct is indefensible, and for good reason. It runs counter to every law of kinship and local custom.

182 589 428 593 But in the case of a young widow, a conflict can arise. The countryside recognizes only dimly, if at all, the right of a woman to hold land in her own person. That does not mean she cannot exercise full control and work the land herself, which she often does. Rather, she is regarded as holding it in trust for a brother or a son of her husband or her father. She cannot alienate it from the patrilineal line to which it belongs. The conflict arises because she herself moves between two such lines; her father's and her husband's.

Consequently, a widow remains upon the farm only if her children are growing up. If they are very young she returns to her father's farm, and a husband's brother takes over. If she is childless, she is hardly regarded as having moved out of her [766] own kindred; she is buried, when she dies, not with her husband but with her father.

182 428 587 593 578 Even if she marries, she and her new husband merely hold the land in trust. The second husband and his children are 'strangers to the land'. The rightful heir by blood, whose 'name' is on the land, may turn them out. So strong is the identification. The woman gets the place only as a mother of the family's sons. One must remember that I am not speaking of formal title or legal right. They

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

may be often quite different and run counter to rural values, breeding strife and forcing the aggrieved to seek redress outside the law.

Here, then, is the new equilibrium in the countryman's social life. The match provides a transition between the generations. Within the family unit, it provides for the establishment of a new nuclear group. It makes room for an essential continuity in which all the members may share and round which all their interests may be centred. Externally, it regathers those whom it must disperse. Round this dispersal, the web of kinship can be built. In the persons of the old people moved one step toward death, and in the identifications round them, 'descent' and 'blood' and 'the name on the land', the emotions of human groups can find their nexus.

In this movement, household, land, adult status, economic control, all move together. Marriage is a turning point round which rural life hinges. It is a structural centre. Every tie between human beings is modified. Then, in a new form, they can crystallize again—to give scope for movement, to allow continuities, to habituate human beings to new social places.

The whole of this movement takes place within a frame of human sentiments, ambitions and desires. Emotion lends its force. Convention, habit and the sanctions of public opinion and private anger keep the bounds and punish transgression. Public honour and self-satisfaction reward conformity.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

potato was one of the factors that led to the decline of rundale agriculture, both because of its late harvest and because it resulted in increased populations which brought disastrous subdivision of the holdings. Under the " gavelkind " code of inheritance a man's property was divided equally among all his sons, so that the impossibly small fields came to be spoken of not as the standard " cow's grass," but as a " foot " and even a half-foot or " cleet."

Much has been written of the drawbacks of the rundale system. It is so easy to condemn it—the " fights, trespasses, confusion, disputes and assaults " to which it gave rise, the wretched poverty which it bred, the evil consequences of dwelling in packed house clusters—that it is well to recall the better side of the system before it fell into decline. A writer in 1853 has left his " recollections of nights of social converse, of aid in sickness, of sympathy in joy and sorrow, of combined operations of defence against bailiff or gauger which contrasted mournfully with the solitary grandeur of the new dwelling." Another apologist wrote : " the closer the rundale system is followed, the more the unwritten customs and regulations observed, the more do intelligent tenants regret a departure from them." Many of its better features, indeed, have survived the enclosure movement and the separation of farms ; we may cite co-operation in farm work and the social fire-side evenings or " caileys." " Gatherings " of many kinds, for work and pleasure, distinguished the rundale communities. Every village had its musician, piper or fiddler, who was often maimed in some way and supported himself by his skill. Folk songs, occupational airs and epic tales were kept alive in this way.

It was formerly the task of an appointed leader in a townland or group of townlands to see that customs were observed, to arrange the casting of lots in re-allotting strips, and so on. Probably we should see in the " king " not long ago recognized as leader in such communities as Rathlin and Tory a relic of this custom.

To understand the village-system in working order we must see it as part of a wider pattern in which cattle-herding

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

size from fourths to quarter-acres, located along the quarter that his community fronts. As a result of past inheritance and purchase, however, five Castle villagers own plots in one or two other quarters, as do five High and two Low villagers. Before field building commenced, the most extensive and fertile soils were found on the terraces; shallow and less widespread soils were situated just south of the terrace crest, while the back of the island was, and still is, mostly limestone pavement. Landholders originally were assigned equal acreage in each of these three areas, so that no one would have an advantage over his neighbors, and this pattern still predominates. The quarters are separated from one another by high, thick stone fences which run almost the length of Inis Beag, and, from west to east, they are known as Quarter of the *Phoillín* (derivation unknown), Quarter of the Ridge of Huts (after an ancient *clochán* settlement behind High Village), Quarter of the Castle, and Quarter of the Lake; they embrace, respectively, 271, 261, 240, and 263 acres.

Fifty-nine of the 71 householders in Inis Beag hold or own land, and one of these is an absentee holder. If an individual possesses four or fewer acres, he is regarded as landless—"a man of few gardens"—and 11 men are so designated. Two as yet unresolved disputes over the possession of land when resolved will add two other householders to the landless category, unless the property is divided in some manner among all four litigants by the Irish Land Commission. The folk prefer to rent rather than to own land, so that the commission will supervise matters relating to inheritance "fairly" and with little cost to the litigants should a dispute arise. The average sized Inis Beag holding is 15.7 acres, or approximately a croggery, and 25 islanders hold this amount of land; in addition, one person has 40 acres, three 32 acres, one 28 acres, eight 24 acres, eight 20 acres, four 12 acres, and nine 8 acres. Below is a chart summing up ownership data by village:

	Landholders and Owners	*Landless Householders*	*Average Sized Holding (in acres)*
Low Village	17	9	11.0
High Village	14	1	18.2
Castle Village	15	2	19.0
Terrace Village	13	1	16.4

The disproportionate number of landless persons in Low are, for the most part, either descendants of fisherfolk who centered in that community in earlier times and did not possess land, or siblings of landholders who chose not to emigrate. They support themselves by craft work, keeping tourists, fishing, managing shops, and working for the government, among other pursuits.

Farming

There is neither legendary nor historical evidence of when soil building commenced in Inis Beag, but the process is an archaic one and is practiced in other communities along the Atlantic seaboard where appropriate seaweeds are available. Today, between 45 and 50 percent of the land surface of the island is

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

declining steadily, and between 1951 and 1960 there were only nine marriages between folk who remained in the island—and since then but five. 582

The prevalence of celibacy and late marriage is a matter of grave concern to the people. My analysis of these phenomena reveals over 20 contributing factors, of which I will consider only the most important—and these briefly, since most of them will be addressed further within the contexts of the family, personality, and emigration. The one most often voiced by the islanders is the emigration of girls in increasing numbers at younger ages; of the nine girls eligible for marriage, only one is older than 25 years, and several are contemplating emigration. The folk are much less prone to talk of the single estate and late marriage than they are of emigration, which share many of the same causes, and they appear to know fewer of the causes of the former and are less willing to assign relative weights when assessing them. The cause of all three conditions most often cited by both writers and social scientists is the system of inheritance, whereby land cannot be subdivided but is passed on to one son who must wait to marry until his father dies or is willing (or forced) to pass on the land, and his siblings have married or emigrated. By this time, the son is usually middle-aged and cautious in making his choice of a spouse. Most fathers in Inis Beag are loath to surrender their property, and with it control of the family, to sons wishing to marry, and some even will postpone receiving the old age in order to maintain their status position past the age of 70 years. A father who does not choose a successor among several sons until late in his life—which is a common occurrence—can retard their marriages if they choose to "wait it out." Equally loath to disturb the family *status quo* is the mother, who fears not only the loss of her commanding position in the household, but the loss of her son's affection to an incoming daughter-in-law. The man who wishes to marry and is prevented from doing so by domineering and jealous parents is the subject of gossip, and his plight is regarded as a "shame."

582 589 829 [167] 582 589 428 593 [888]

Since late marriage has been a persistent phenomenon in Ireland since the great famine, it has become institutionalized and serves as an expectation for young people. That the folk are aware of this cause is attested by their frequent advice to offspring that they postpone marriage to conform to island tradition. This advice invariably is buttressed by a rationale of males not having enough "sense" to marry until they approach the age of 40 years. Reflected in the rationale is the system of male age grading conceptualized in Inis Beag: a man is a "boy" or "lad" until 40 years of age, an adult until 60 years, middle-aged until 80, and old-aged after that (exhilarating to the American anthropologist who comes from a society obsessed with the "cult of youth"). Another rationale for late marriage often heard in Inis Beag is the impossibility of divorce in Catholic Ireland, which demands that the choice of a spouse be well considered. It appears that this argument is usually used to explain late marriage when other factors are in fact responsible—certainly when "considering" covers two or more decades.

582 175 829 [561] [586]

Two closely linked causes of celibacy and late marriage seldom broached in Inis Beag are male solidarity and the unwillingness of many men to accept the responsibilities of marriage, particularly its sexual responsibilities. Marriage is looked on with trepidation, or at least as something less than desirable. The marriageable man in his late twenties and thirties is usually sexually repressed to an unbelieve-

582 589 581 562 [593] [164]

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

Implicit in these statistics are such Irish phenomena as monogamy, the predominance of the nuclear family (Only 10.3 percent are extended in Inis Beag.), family exogamy, patrilocal residence, and a high incidence of celibacy. The last listed bachelor who lives with his widowed sister-in-law, and frequently is visited by a brother's adolescent grandson from the mainland, is regarded by many bachelors as fortunate—"He has a woman and a boy to work and no 'responsibilities.'"

Inheritance in the island is patrilineal, and before a man can marry, his father or widowed mother must "pass on" the property to him. To encourage aged men to surrender ownership of their land, a statute forbids their receiving the old age at 70 years until they have so acted. But despite this law, six Inis Beag elders aged 70 to 79 years—with a total of seven bachelor sons ranging in age from 32 to 47 years (not counting eight others who have emigrated but are eligible to inherit)—still maintain ownership themselves. When a man is without sons, he most commonly wills the land to a brother's son or arranges to have a man wed his daughter and "marry in" to the household. An in-marrying son-in-law, it is interesting to note, may pay a bride wealth, which usually is much larger than the dowry of the girl, for he has no land of his own. Among contemporary landholders, five have obtained property from uncles, six from widowed mothers, and two by marrying in. Other land in Inis Beag has been procured through purchase, exchange, gift-giving, and land dispute verdicts.

A major cause of celibacy, late marriage, disputes, and emigration related to the system of inheritance, seldom mentioned either in writings about Inis Beag or by the islanders, is the common practice of a father playing off his sons against one another for the patrimony in order to achieve favored treatment for his wife and himself in their waning years. Elders are well treated, in part as a result of the above and in part out of the fear that after death their ghosts will punish those who have maltreated them. Often the playing off of sons for the patrimony leads to factionalism within the family and may provoke a secretly favored son to emigrate or, more seriously, all sons acting in concert to depart in anger and disgust. Today, a total of 22 married men, widowers, and widows whose average age is 65.7, hold land that is inheritable by a total of 56 sons whose average age is 30.1 years. (The 16 elders who have a total of 20 sons in the island average 66.7 years of age and their offspring 33.6.) The uncertainty about which sibling will inherit is reflected in these figures: of the 59 present landholders, 47 percent are first born, 42 percent second, 8 percent third, and 3 percent fourth and beyond.

Although the Inis Beag family is totally exogamous, the village is only 78.3 percent exogamous (The range for the four villages is from 75 to 83 percent.). Since 1911, six women have married men, mostly farmers, living in communities along the neighboring coast and only one an Inis Thiar islander, while four mainland and five Inis Thiar women have wed men from Inis Beag. During this same 50 year period, six local men have married into contiguous mainland settlements and one into Inis Thiar, but no men from the outside have married into the island. As we have noted already, immigrants for two or three generations are regarded as strangers by the folk, and the same is true of in-marrying wives; these women are treated aloofly and are the victims of much spiteful gossip. Many female siblings marry locally rather than emigrate—one case of four sisters, five of

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

582 621 593 three sisters, and ten of two—and they tend to visit together often and lend mutual economic and emotional support.

591 • 428 342 822 776 When a man marries, his parents relinquish the holding, and its direction passes into the hands of the newlyweds. Arensberg and Kimball talk of the "west room" complex, which may exist in many parts of peasant Ireland but does not in Inis Beag. Houses in north and west Co. Clare "with remarkable uniformity" are aligned east and west, and on the son's marriage the old couple moves into the westernmost room "behind the hearth." This room is linked with the Celtic supernatural, for fairy paths are thought to be located along the western side of many houses, and the pagan afterworld—the Isle of the Blest—is a sunken land mass in the nearby western sea (Arensberg and Kimball 1940:154–156). In Inis Beag, on the contrary, over one-third of the domiciles since 1841 have been aligned north and south, fairy trails are found mostly at the back of the island, and a retiring couple may choose any of three rooms (or more in modern homes) to move into. The west room of Co. Clare is called simply "the room" in Inis Beag.

342 [178] [177] [65] Thirty-four of the 71 inhabited buildings in the island have thatched roofs (see Fig. 8), while the others are antiquated houses which lately have been renovated, mainly by replacing thatch with slate, or are newly built. The last of the traditional "cabins" or "cottages" were constructed in the 1930s, and the first of the modern ones during the 1890s—with two stories initially, and styled and subsidized by the Congested Districts Board. Old and renovated houses are rectangular in shape, are constructed of whitewashed stones with concrete floors, and have a large central kitchen with doors or half-doors to the outside both front and back. "The room" is beyond the kitchen at one end of the building, and two bedrooms (one in the most ancient cabins) are at the other. Lofts for sleeping are in the gable of the roof above "the room" and bedrooms, and are entered by ladder [372] or staircase from the kitchen. Fireplaces share a common wall and chimney between the kitchen and "the room," as they also may between the two bedrooms; but the kitchen hearth is the most used, and in some homes is not permitted to die out.

351 [343] [244] The space between the cottage and the low stone wall and outbuildings surrounding it is called the "street." Outbuildings at the back include a toilet and various storage sheds—for spuds and turf sods in particular, although the latter often are stacked instead against a gable of the cabin. In a portion of the street or a small field beyond the wall, a garden for vegetables is maintained for easy access.

342 [262] [264] [415] [118] [352] The kitchen doors of the house sometimes open into small halls in the front or back, or both, and when the weather is not too cold or blustery, the door opening to the street on the windward side is kept closed and its opposite open. In the kitchen, which is the center of family activities, are: the fireplace at which cooking is done with pot and cooking ovens hung from an iron hook; the table around which the family eats their five daily meals; the sideboard, known as a "dresser," filled with "delph"—both everyday and "best" china; the religious shrine with "blessed lamp" surrounded by religious pictures and sacred objects; and, occasionally, a "settlebed" which, when closed, serves as a bench during the daytime.

354 [352] [516] [593] [178] The hearth in the kitchen is indented into the wall to provide two hobs, or seats, and on a chilly or dampish day the folk will nestle inside the fireplace and sit tightly together on a bench drawn up close to the turf fire for warmth. This

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

fireplace has a profound psychological significance in Inis Beag and, in a sense, is a force drawing the family together. Now that only three hookers transport peat from the mainland—when in the past there had been more than a hundred—and the price of turf increases considerably year by year, coal or bottled gas stoves are being used by most families. Although coal and gas are cheaper to burn, and coal throws out more heat than turf, the coal fire in the hearth does not foster camaraderie as does the peat fire. The replacement of fireplace by stove and the "stink" and dirtiness of coal are denounced incessantly by the islanders, and the disappearance of the "sweet smell" of burning sods and a multitude of customs associated for generations with the peat fire are lamented.

Many functions are served by "the room." It can accommodate the displaced parents after their son has married, if all agree, for it has a bed which can serve them (as well as distinguished guests, spectators at parties, and now tourists and summer language school students). This chamber is the best kept of the house, with the newest and most valuable of the furniture and often a linoleum floor, and its walls and ceiling are whitewashed or painted frequently. Family heirlooms and objects of sentimental value, which are parted with only as a last resort, are found here. Religious pictures adorn the walls, and on the mantel over the fireplace are photographs of the family going back generations, especially of those who have emigrated or are deceased. When "the stations" are performed every two decades in the cottage, the mass is read in "the room," and certain rubrics used in this ritual are afterward kept here. Finally, the chamber serves as a dance floor when the crowd at a party in the house overflows the bounds of kitchen, hall, and street.

The social universe of the islanders is divided into four segments: close kin or "friends" (Previously, I have used this word in the American sense.), distant kin or "those I have a relationship with," other islanders, and outsiders or strangers. "Friends" normally extend generationally to include ego's parents, grandparents, children, and grandchildren, and collaterally to include his affines (spouse's kinsmen), siblings, and first, second, and third cousins—termed, respectively, "four-of-kin," "six-of-kin," and "eight-of-kin."[1] With the intensification of inbreeding, most of the folk are eight-of-kin, and this is why the parish priest examines the genealogies of families at the time of the match. Marriage between first cousins is forbidden, between second cousins demands permission from the bishop, and between third the consent of the parish priest. Distant kin are relatives extended collaterally beyond eight-of-kin, while outsiders include the curates, teachers who are not islanders, lighthouse keepers, the Dane, tourists of local renown, and, as I have just indicated, even in-marrying women and descendants of recently arrived immigrants (also, of course, inquisitive anthropologists).

Although inheritance and succession are patrilineal on the island, descent is bilateral—traced through both agnatic (father's) and uterine (mother's) lines --with a strong agnatic bias.

[1] These positions are pictured horizontally (generationally) and vertically (collaterally) in block form in Arensberg and Kimball 1940:96 in the chapter "Kinship System." The Irish kinship system is common to peoples of Western Europe and America (the Eskimo type), and much of the kinship information reported by Arensberg and Kimball applies to Inis Beag.

16:Messenger E-4.5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

closely approximate those for Aughnaboy; only the severity classification in Inis Beag differs, with gossip most prevalent followed by withdrawal, argument, and interference.

A further step in Leyton's analysis is his examination of the severity of disputes and the issues provoking them with relation to the four categories of persons involved. Jealousy and personality clashes, in that order, are the causes of disputes between affinal kin in Aughnaboy, which give rise to withdrawal and argument. In the case of agnatic kin, the causes are personality clashes and economic conflict, and withdrawal and argument are the sole responses; the same causes apply to disputes between non-kin, but interference rather than withdrawal is by far the most conspicuous response. Disputes between uterine kin are negligible. These rank orders are in accord with those of Inis Beag except for the predominance of interference in disputes between non-kin; on the island, gossip and withdrawal outweigh interference. The major disputes in Inis Beag are: between spouses and between mothers and daughters-in-law among affinal kin; between fathers and sons, between brothers, and between brothers and sisters among agnatic kin; and between families, between shopkeepers, and between particular individuals who are distantly or not related. Since disputes between agnatic, uterine, and affinal kin have been discussed in the last two sections, I will consider here only disputes between non-kin.

At least eight family disputes are ongoing in Inis Beag today, one of which has roots in events of a century ago (Another is supported by the exhortations of a ghost, as we shall see in the next chapter.). All are the result of past and present contests over the ownership and inheritance of land, and of past personality clashes which have led to violent argument and interference, especially physical violence, and have come to involve near cognates of the original enemies—"a clash between two individuals soon becomes a clash between two groups of kin." This type of factionalism gives rise mostly to gossip and the avoidance of one another by members of the contending families; only on rare occasions, usually at large social gatherings after much drink has been taken by the men, will disputants engage in face-to-face argument, which soon can provoke fighting between two and sometimes more persons. Fights are short-lived, inasmuch as other islanders, the headmaster, or the priest intervene to redress "the delicate balance of power . . . between the separate groups of kin." Legal suits over land ownership and inheritance have been many during the past three decades, and on several occasions guards have been summoned to Inis Beag by feuding families to investigate cases of physical violence and the destruction of property. Theft as a form of interference is practically unknown on the island. Economic conflict and the clash of personalities also underlie the dispute between the two shopkeepers, and gossip and withdrawal characterize their relationship, just as that between members of disputing families.

Since most of the folk in Inis Beag are related at least distantly, the term non-kin denotes both "those I have a relationship with" and those who are unrelated. Leyton finds that most non-kin disputes in Aughnaboy involve at least one person who has no effective kin; this situation does not exist in the island where everyone has effective kin. By far the greatest number of disputes between non-kin in Inis Beag occur between members of the same sex and involve men rather than

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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776 787 ing souls of children and leaving in their place changelings, who gradually sicken and die. Since boys are favored over girls, Irish peasants of the region until recently dressed their male offspring in petticoats, sometimes up to the age of 18 years, to deceive the little people. Even now parents are loath to praise the health or beauty of their children for fear that the gentry will overhear and be prompted to victimize their souls.

Solitary fairies are described by Yeats as "withered, old, and solitary, in every way unlike the sociable [trooping fairies]. . . . They dress with all unfairy homeliness, and are, indeed, most sluttish, slouching, peering, mischievous phantoms" (Yeats ND :76). The long occupation of Inis Beag by leprechauns is evidenced by the Garden of the Cobbler and a spring at the back of the island, shaped like the sole of a shoe, which is known as Well of the Boot. Occasionally a leprechaun has been seen in the former location, but only the sound of a tapping hammer has been heard in the latter. Instead of guarding a buried pot of gold at the foot of a rainbow, as popularly conceived, the leprechaun of Inis Beag possesses a small purse in which he keeps but a single coin. Children sometimes are urged to hunt for the hidden purse, as a distraction by harassed parents. The rift valley between Castle and High Villages is thought to be the home of at least one "red man." He wears a pointed cap to denote cleverness and has a laugh, as distinctive as the hammering of the leprechaun, by which his presence is known. A practical joker with poltergeist qualities, the red man prefers to frequent houses, where his mischief is countered with bottles of holy water. From November of 1959 until June of 1963, my wife and I experienced, first in Inis Beag and then in our home in the United States, the antics of an unseen being who opened doors and windows, turned on lights and water faucets, and imbibed our Irish whiskey. Tongue-in-cheek, we placed the blame for these uncanny occurrences on an amiable solitary fairy who had attached himself to us, but eventually I felt compelled to report our unique contact with the Celtic supernatural to the anthropological community—a gesture regarded as "poison oak in the scientific groves of academe" (Messenger 1962:367–373).

The spiritual omens of death are three in Inis Beag: the sound of trooping fairies building a coffin for the victim, soft tapping on the window pane of his bedroom, and the wailing of the banshee during the night before his demise. No one has ever viewed the banshee, but many have heard her cry out in the night, and the keen of Celtic derivation is said to be an imitation of her funeral call. She attaches herself only to certain families which inherit her patrilineally. An aged Inis Beag man was seriously ill with influenza on the night that my wife and I sponsored a dancing party, and a young man departing from it three hours after midnight played his accordion as he walked to his home located near that of the sick person. On learning of this event, the nurse shortly after dawn hurried to her patient to assure him that the wails he might have heard came from the instrument of the inexpert youth and not from the family banshee; at this news, thanatomania was prevented and the man lived another three weeks, when the banshee at last cried and was heard by those at his deathbed. Opinion is divided as to whether it is the fairies or the banshee who announce death by window tapping, but as a practical joke islanders long ago used to tap on the bedroom windows of those persons considered overly superstitious.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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168 829 [522] government increase its services and subsidies even more, reveal the underlying tension within those who are most strongly committed to the local tradition and wish its perpetuation.

167 168 829 12 The index of my field notes contains more references to emigration than to any other category, for seldom in an interview, whether guided or open-ended, did the topic fail to come up, no matter what was the initial subject under consideration. Of the more than 30 causes of the phenomenon yielded by my analysis, all are known to the folk, and they are ever eager to express opinions as to the relative weights which should be attached to those that they deem significant. My wife and I usually were solicited for our opinions as well whenever the topic was addressed. I will deal below with only the major causes of emigration from Inis Beag, and will consider first those which are internal—the "push" factors—and then those which are external—the "pull" factors. The islanders emphasize external causes in their own deliberations, but those who are not apologists for the *status quo*, or who are genuinely bewildered by the exodus of young people in recent years, are able to identify the internal ones also, but are less willing to assign them sufficient weight. Emigration is the topic about which my wife and I could be most objective and outspoken concerning the role of the church and obtain the most agreement and arouse the least resentment among our respondents.

167 428 589 592 [121] Paramount among the push factors are the previously considered system of inheritance and the causes underlying the prevalence of celibacy, late marriage, and personality depression. The fact that only one son in a family can inherit land, which forces his brothers to emigrate, is the internal factor most stressed in the literature pertaining to Inis Beag, but least stressed by the folk. The reason for this is that until recently it was rather common for siblings without land to remain on the island, thanks to the benevolence of their brothers and the government and their ability to support themselves by craft work, keeping tourists, fishing, managing [162] shops, and obtaining remittances. Of the 71 households in Inis Beag, 28 are headed by male siblings: 20 in which 10 pairs of brothers and their families live, 3 in which 3 pairs of bachelor siblings reside, 3 in which 3 brothers and their families live, and 2 in which 3 siblings reside—two as bachelors in one and [182] the third with his family in the other. It is apparent that other factors, of equal or greater importance, are stimulating emigration.

167 168 581 [829] [162] The push factor given the most weight by the islanders is the unwillingness of men to marry—"The lads are too fussy, and the girls get tired of waiting and go off." But the fact that male "fussiness" is based on such conditions as parents opposing the marriage of their sons for various reasons and bachelors being loath to assume the responsibilities of marriage, especially its sexual responsibilities, seldom is probed. Sometimes it is the girls who are accused of "putting off" potential spouses by being too discriminating, but this accusation becomes untenable when one observes that there is but a single unmarried woman between the ages of 26 and 44 years in Inis Beag (as compared to 18 men), and that the average age at which women emigrate has dropped from 24.5 years during the 1941–1950 decade to 21.1 during the last decade (as compared to 24.9 to 23.8 for men). Some girls admit that they are emigrating because the possibility of their being asked to marry is remote, but far more of them are dissatisfied with the lot of married

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[For information pertaining to emigration and its relation to sexual repression, late marriage, celibacy, and family relations in Ireland, see 17: Messenger, ER6 Rural Irish, category 116, pp. 32-36.]

17: Messenger E-4,5 (1958-1966)1971 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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human relationships are few. There is, in fact, little difference in the style of life between the most and the least prosperous of the islanders. The web of kinship rather than the possession of status attributes, for the most part, determines who will interact with whom and in what manner. Land and money are the principal symbols, with formal education and influential relatives (particularly priests, nuns, and teachers), on the mainland and abroad, becoming more important. Two generations ago, strength, courage, economic skills, and musical and storytelling abilities were highly regarded as well, but acculturation has lessened their significance.

Although there are fifty-nine nuclear families, only thirteen surnames exist today. There is much inbreeding, as might be expected, and the church carefully checks the genealogies of prospective spouses to ascertain their degree of consanguinity. Courtship is almost nonexistent, and most marriages are arranged with little concern for the desires of the young people involved. Late marriage and celibacy are as prevalent in Inis Beag as elsewhere in Ireland. The average marriage age for men is thirty-six and for women twenty-five, and 29 percent of those persons eligible for marriage are single.[3] The functions of the family are mainly economic and reproductive, and conjugal love is extremely rare. A sharp dichotomy exists between the sexes; both before and after marriage men interact mostly with men and women with women. The average family has seven offspring, and many women are unhappy about being forced by the unauthorized decree of local priests to produce as many children as possible. They feel that the constant bearing and rearing of offspring increase their work, restrict their freedom, and perpetuate the poverty of their families. Jealousy of the greater freedom of men is commonly expressed by women who have many young children. Mothers bestow a considerable amount of attention and affection on their offspring, especially on their sons. However, tensions between fathers and sons which develop in childhood often flare into scarcely repressed hostility

[3] Twenty-nine percent of those islanders of marriageable age are single. This rises to a high of 37 percent among first and second generation Inis Beag emigrants, indicating the actions of more than just economic causes. Irish scholars, for obvious reasons, tend to stress economic and other (climate, race, English oppression, the famine, loss of the Irish tongue, etc.) monistic causes in their analyses of culture and personality phenomena. Inadequate statistics for second and third generation migrants from Inis Beag suggest that the celibacy rate lowers markedly only when descendants of immigrants dissociate themselves from Irish ethnic communities and Irish-American priests. Ethnographic research is sorely needed among Irish of several generations in the countries to which they have migrated to probe this and other phenomena.

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later on, particularly in those families where competition for the inheritance of property is engendered among siblings by the fathers' attempts to ensure favored treatment in old age.

Men are far more active socially than are women. The latter are restricted by custom mostly to visiting, attending parties during the winter, and participating in church-associated activities. Many women leave their cottages only to attend mass, wakes, and funerals or to make infrequent calls on relatives; my wife and I talked with some elderly women who had not visited other villages or walked to the back of the island for thirty or more years. Men not only attend parties with their womenfolk but go to dances during the summer, frequent the pubs, play cards almost nightly during November and December (the period when once people congregated to hear storytellers), visit the homes of kin and friends or meet along the trails at night, and range the entire island and the sea about it in their economic pursuits. Before the age of benevolent government, women shared many economic tasks with men, such as collecting seaweed, baiting lines, and gutting fish. But now they tend to household chores and only milk cows and perform some of the lighter farming jobs with their fathers and husbands.

The island folk are devout Catholics, despite the fact that they are critical of their priests and hold pagan religious beliefs. Youth of Inis Beag overtly disallow the existence of other than church-approved supernatural entities. However, their elders cling to traditional pagan beliefs and practices (many of which are Druidic in origin) about which they are extremely secretive for fear of being ridiculed by outsiders and their more skeptical neighbors. The non-Christian array of spiritual beings includes various spirits and demons, ghosts, witches, phantom ships, and animals and material objects possessing human attributes and volitions. Prominent among the spirits thought to inhabit Inis Beag are the trooping and solitary fairies, sea creatures, mermaids, and the banshee. The most formidable of the demons is a pooka which lives in a Bronze Age burial mound and roams the strand and common land at night altering its shape and size at will; during the day it will twist the limbs of unwary persons who choose the hill for a resting place. Ghosts, called "shades," are frequently seen after dark performing economic tasks. They are thought to be doing penance in purgatory, which embraces the earth as well as a spiritual locus; this is one example of the many reinterpretations of Christian and pagan belief effected by the islanders. The only form of witchcraft practiced today is the casting of the evil eye. At least three persons, suitably ostracized, are believed to be able to perpetrate evil

17: Messenger E-4,5 (1958-1966)1971 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS

I have already touched tangentially on some of the historical and broad cultural implications of sexual puritanism, in Ireland as well as Inis Beag. In this final section, I will examine the perennially addressed phenomena of late marriage, celibacy, and emigration, in their island setting, with special reference to the factor of sexual repression.

In a population of 350, 116 persons are married, 13 are widows, 3 are widowers, and 33 males over twenty-three years of age and 21 females over seventeen are single. Since marriage occurs between twenty-four and forty-five for men and eighteen and thirty-two for women, on the basis of past statistics, only 18 men and 9 women are eligible for marriage. As mentioned earlier, the average marriage age for males is thirty-six and for females twenty-five. My wife and I isolated almost two dozen interrelated causes of late marriage and the prevalence of bachelor and spinsterhood. The most emphasized cause in Ireland is the pattern of inheritance: one son, usually the eldest, must wait until the father is ready to pass on his patrimony and his own siblings have married or emigrated. In an attempt to alleviate the situation somewhat, a law today requires that to receive the "old-age" (pension) a man at seventy must will his property to a son, or other appropriate person. This cause is important in Inis Beag, although primogeniture is not so well defined (of those sons inheriting property, 47 percent are first born, 42 percent second, 8 percent third, and 3 percent fourth and later). Inis Beag fathers are loath to surrender their land and control of the household to their sons and will often play off the sons, one against another, in order to achieve favored treatment for their wives and themselves in their waning years. Occasionally this procedure "backfires": the sons, acting in concert, emigrate together, and an increasing amount of land lies idle because of this.

Equally loath to disturb the family status quo, island mothers will often resist incoming daughters-in-law, who threaten not only their commanding position but the loss of their sons' affection. Mothers whom we have interviewed in Inis Beag and elsewhere in Ireland display the extreme of Oedipal attachment when they rejoice in their sons' decision